Marc Kippen awarded inaugural Global Security Medal

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Medal honors commitment to Los Alamos National Laboratory's mission

Los Alamos, N.M., Sept. 24, 2018—R. Marc Kippen has been awarded the inaugural Los Alamos Global Security Medal in recognition of his innovative professional and scientific excellence supporting the Laboratory's global security mission. Specifically, Kippen is recognized for his leadership and achievements in developing, promoting, and sustaining national security capabilities and programs in space-based sensing and nuclear detonation detection.

"Marc Kippen has dedicated his career to the Laboratory's national security mission," said Terry C. Wallace, Jr., director of Los Alamos National Laboratory. "Los Alamos has a long and storied history in monitoring nuclear explosions, and Marc has been a leader in the space-based nuclear detonation and detection program. He has designed satellite hardware, played a key role in interpreting data collected by those satellites for national monitoring techniques, and has been an architect of the national policy to continue to monitor from space. It is an honor to award Dr. Kippen the first Global Security Medal."

Established earlier this year, the Los Alamos Global Security Medal recognizes the exceptional achievements of active or recently retired Laboratory employees who have made significant contributions to the Los Alamos National Laboratory global security mission.

"Marc is very well-known and respected at home and abroad in national security programs that have impacted not only the Laboratory, but also national and international communities," said Nancy Jo Nicholas, who heads the Global Security directorate at Los Alamos. "His innovation, substantial contributions, and steadfast commitment to space-based capabilities and programs will be felt far into the future supporting key mission areas of this Laboratory."

Kippen currently serves as the Nuclear Detonation and Test Detection Program manager for the Nuclear Nonproliferation and Security Program, leading and managing research and development in science and national security, specifically nuclear treaty verification. Kippen is also an active contributor to the tactical and strategic operation of the Los Alamos space program as well as activities related to the overall goals and direction of the Laboratory. He has more than 25 years of experience in space science, astrophysics, energetic radiation and particle sensing, and applied R&D leadership.

“Designing, producing, and operating a space-based instrument is a notoriously challenging business. Consequences of failure are tremendous,” said Evelyn Mullen, associate director for Threat Identification and Response at Los Alamos. “Through his leadership, vision, and determination, Marc maintains a clear, persistent, and outstanding record of space-based achievements that continue to advance the Laboratory’s capabilities, expertise, and global reputation in nuclear detonation detection.”

He received his Ph.D. in physics from the University of New Hampshire, is a graduate of the Los Alamos National Laboratory Management Institute, and has published more than 200 articles in scientific journals and conference proceedings. Kippen’s nomination was endorsed by distinguished members of the national security and scientific communities.

An award ceremony will be held in October.